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Dear Student, Artist, Thinker,

Many people this year were saddened to learn that, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the 2020 Olympic Games were postponed (currently rescheduled to take place in 2021). Compared to other global problems and concerns, the Olympics may seem like small potatoes, and I certainly couldn't fault you if you had more pressing things on your mind. Still, it's worth reflecting on what this regular, international competition means to the human race — why people running in large circles and/or throwing differently-shaped objects is such a big deal.

One thing I think about is how the Olympic tradition encourages competition instead of conflict between nations. True, the games have not ended war or hostility on Earth, and the story that in ancient times, Greek city-states declared peace for the duration of the sport is actually just a myth. But, religious pilgrims on their way to Olympia (where the games were held) could travel safely (generally speaking) through warring lands. And that's not nothing.

In this competition, athletes are not just representing their home country; they represent humanity. Anyone who has engaged in sport, in athletic activity, knows the simplicity and purity of physical exertion, of pushing your body out of its comfort zone in order to redefine what your limitations are. Even if those days are behind us (I, for one, am all too aware of how knees and backs get increasingly grouchy as we age), we can still watch these Olympic contenders and appreciate the hard work it took to get to that point.

Another aspect I try to remember is that the difference between a gold medal and a silver one can come down to a tenth, or even a hundredth of a second. And I push back against the idea that if you happen to be the one who's a fraction of a second too late to win the gold, or to win a medal at all, then your worth is considerably less than "first place." Watch the hundred-meter dash, for example, and you'll see eight runners who all finish within a half second of each other. Sure, one may be a shoe-lace-width ahead of the others, but compared to the rest of the world? They're all champions. Compared to me, you are the champion of something else. And we can forever push each other to do even better.

Kyes Stevens and the APAEP Team



“The first is to love your sport. Never do it to please someone else. It has to be yours.”

PEGGY FLEMING // American figure skater

WORDS INSIDE

FROM “ARE THE OLYMPICS”...

amenities | any features that provide comfort, convenience, or pleasure

lavish | sumptuously rich, elaborate, or luxurious

scuttled | to have “sunk one’s own ship,” or deliberately have caused (a plan) to fail

nebulous | unclear, vague, or ill-defined

infrastructure | the basic physical and organizational structures and facilities (e.g. buildings, roads, power supplies) needed for the operation of a society or enterprise

overzealous | showing too much enthusiasm, energy, or zeal

...



HISTORY

The Olympic Games

THE EDITORS | *History.com* | Updated Aug 21, 2018

The Olympics in Ancient Greece

The first written records of the ancient Olympic Games date to 776 B.C., when a cook named Coroebus won the only event—a 192-meter foot race called the stade (the origin of the modern “stadium”)—to become the first Olympic champion. However, it is generally believed that the Games had been going on for many years by that time. Legend has it that Heracles (the Roman Hercules), son of Zeus and the mortal woman Alcmene, founded the Games, which by the end of the 6th century B.C. had become the most famous of all Greek sporting festivals. The ancient Olympics were held every four years between August 6 and September 19 during a religious festival honoring Zeus. The Games were named for their location at Olympia, a sacred site located near the western coast of the Peloponnese peninsula in southern Greece. Their influence was so great that ancient historians began to measure time by the four-year increments in between Olympic Games, which were known as Olympiads.

After 13 Olympiads, two more races joined the stade as Olympic events: the diaulos (roughly equal to today’s 400-meter race), and the dolichos (a longer-distance race, possibly comparable to the 1,500-meter or 5,000-meter event). The pentathlon (consisting of five events: a foot race, a long jump, discus and javelin throws and a wrestling match) was introduced in 708 B.C., boxing in 688 B.C. and chariot racing in 680 B.C. In 648 B.C., pankration, a combination of boxing and wrestling with virtually no rules, debuted as an Olympic event. Participation in the ancient Olympic Games was initially limited to freeborn male citizens of Greece; there were no women’s events, and married women were prohibited from attending the competition.

Decline and Revival of the Olympic Tradition

After the Roman Empire conquered Greece in the mid-2nd century B.C., the Games continued, but their standards and quality declined. In one notorious example from A.D. 67, the decadent Emperor Nero entered an Olympic chariot race, only to disgrace himself by declaring himself the winner even after he fell off his chariot during the event. In A.D. 393, Emperor Theodosius I, a Christian, called for a ban on all “pagan” festivals, ending the ancient Olympic tradition after nearly 12 centuries.

It would be another 1,500 years before the Games would rise again, largely thanks to the efforts of Baron Pierre de Coubertin (1863-1937) of France. Dedicated to the promotion of physical education, the young baron became inspired by the idea of creating a modern Olympic Games after visiting the ancient Olympic site. In November 1892, at a meeting of the Union des Sports

Athlétiques in Paris, Coubertin proposed the idea of reviving the Olympics as an international athletic competition held every four years. Two years later, he got the approval he needed to found the International Olympic Committee (IOC), which would become the governing body of the modern Olympic Games.

The Olympics Through the Years

The first modern Olympics were held in Athens, Greece, in 1896. In the opening ceremony, King Georgios I and a crowd of 60,000 spectators welcomed 280 participants from 13 nations (all male), who would compete in 43 events, including track and field, gymnastics, swimming, wrestling, cycling, tennis, weightlifting, shooting and fencing. All subsequent Olympiads have been numbered even when no Games take place (as in 1916, during World War I, and in 1940 and 1944, during World War II). The official symbol of the modern Games is five interlocking colored rings, representing the continents of North and South America, Asia, Africa, Europe and Australia. The Olympic flag, featuring this symbol on a white background, flew for the first time at the Antwerp Games in 1920.

The Olympics truly took off as an international sporting event after 1924, when the VIII Games were held in Paris. Some 3,000 athletes (with more than 100 women among them) from 44 nations competed that year, and for the first time the Games featured a closing ceremony. The Winter Olympics debuted that year, including such events as figure skating, ice hockey, bobsledding and the biathlon. Eighty years later, when the 2004 Summer Olympics returned to Athens for the first time in more than a century, nearly 11,000 athletes from a record 201 countries competed. In a gesture that joined both ancient and modern Olympic traditions, the shotput competition that year was held at the site of the classical Games in Olympia. ●

THE OLYMPIC TORCH IS LIT THE OLD-FASHIONED WAY IN AN ANCIENT CEREMONY AT THE TEMPLE OF HERA, IN GREECE: ACTRESSES, WEARING COSTUMES OF GREEK PRIESTESSES, USE A PARABOLIC MIRROR AND SUN RAYS TO KINDLE THE TORCH.



THE FIVE RINGS OF THE OLYMPIC SYMBOL — DESIGNED BY BARON PIERRE DE COUBERTIN, CO-FOUNDER OF THE MODERN OLYMPIC GAMES — REPRESENT THE FIVE INHABITED CONTINENTS OF THE WORLD.

✎ Edited for space and clarity

WORD PLAY A Rebus puzzle is a picture representation of a common word or phrase. How the letters/images appear within each box will give you clues to the answer! For example, if you saw the letters “LOOK ULEAP,” you could guess that the phrase is “Look before you leap.” *Answers are on the last page!*



PROFILE

How Jesse Owens Went from Alabama to Olympic Glory

BY BENEDICT WHITE | *The Telegraph* | May 18, 2016

The life of Jesse Owens was no fairy tale. Born in 1913 in Oakville, Alabama, he was the youngest of 10 children and grandson of a slave.

His father was a sharecropper – a cog in a semi-feudal system whereby small tenant farmers paid their rent with a share of the crops they raised.

As a boy Owens was sickly, suffering from bronchitis and pneumonia, but he had to help out in the fields. By the age of six, he was picking up to 100 pounds a day of cotton during harvest time. With no money to pay a doctor, his mother once removed a growth from his chest with a knife. Yet already he loved to run.

When Owens was nine, his family moved to Cleveland, Ohio, in search of a better life in the booming steel town. They were part of the Great Migration, in which 1.5 million Black people gravitated to the cities in search of industrial work. His father Henry and elder brothers got jobs in the steel mills while Jesse enrolled at Bolton Elementary School.

Owens was philosophical about his childhood. “We used to have a lot of fun. We never had any problems. We always ate. The fact that we didn’t have steak? Who had steak?”

His first contact with someone who grasped his extraordinary athletic potential came at Fairmount Junior High School in Cleveland. Charles Riley noticed the 15-year-old running in the playground and encouraged him to train before school. Owens combined his training schedule with jobs delivering groceries, loading freight cars and working in a shoe repair shop.

Owens also met his future wife, Minnie Ruth Solomon, then 13, in 1928 and they began dating. They married in 1935, having already had the first of their three daughters. They remained together until Owens died in 1980. She was always a staunch support, seeing the marriage as a partnership.

Records continued to fall in sprint and jump events as Owens moved on to East Cleveland Technical High. Owens was taught to run as if the track were on fire, saying later: “I let my feet spend as little time on the ground as possible. From the air, fast down, and from the ground, fast up.”

He was inundated with university offers but opted for Ohio State University, where coach Larry Snyder became a new mentor. Though Ohio offered no track scholarships, Snyder was one of few US coaches who allowed black athletes to compete. To pay his fees, Owens

grafted away as a lift operator, pumped gas, waited tables, and became an honorary page at the Ohio Statehouse.

Although he was the first Black captain of Ohio State’s athletics team, he was not allowed to live on campus, eat at the same restaurants as white team-mates when travelling, or stay in white-designated hotels.

In 1935 he capped his record of collegiate victories by setting world records in three events (long jump, 220-yard sprint and 220-yard low hurdles) and matching a fourth (100-yard sprint) in just 45 minutes at the Big Ten athletics meeting in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Owens achieved four gold medals at the Berlin Olympics a year later, the first televised Games. He won in the 100m and 200m sprint, the 4x100m sprint relay, and the long jump, emphatically denying the Nazis the propaganda victory they sought. Hitler was appalled, while Owens was, for a time, the most famous man in the world. Yet when he went home, he received no presidential congratulatory telegram, and there was no invitation waiting to shake the hand of President Franklin D Roosevelt at the White House.

“After I came home from the 1936 Olympics with my four medals,” he said, “it became increasingly apparent that everyone was going to slap me on the back, want to shake my hand or have me up to their suite. But nobody was going to offer me a job.”

In the years that followed, Owens took many different diverse jobs, from starting a dry-cleaning business to a government role as director of national fitness; from being an African-American personnel director at Ford to working as a training and running coach for the New York Mets.

Owens also worked in motivational speaking, international coaching and public relations. As the years went by, a steady stream of honours followed, culminating in 1976 with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest US civilian award. Owens died four years later of lung cancer in Tucson, Arizona. He was 66. ●

● Edited for space and clarity



Jesse Owens at the 1936 Olympics

Image from Getty



WHAT IS HARDER TO CATCH THE FASTER YOU RUN?

WHY SHOULDN'T YOU TELL A JOKE WHILE YOU ARE ICE SKATING?

riddles.nu

MATHEMATICS

Sudoku

#69 PUZZLE NO. 4884701

				6				
9	4			2				5
	2		9	8	7			
	8	4		3		2	1	
					8			
		7				6		3
				4			7	
2								
	6		2					

©Sudoku.cool

#70 PUZZLE NO. 5978524

								5
	7	8	1				6	
9			8		2	4		
	9	6						
1				9		8		2
								9
				6	7		3	
4						5		
		5	3					

©Sudoku.cool

SUDOKU HOW-TO GUIDE

1. Each block, row, and column must contain the numbers 1–9.
2. Sudoku is a game of logic and reasoning, so you should not need to guess.
3. Don't repeat numbers within each block, row, or column.
4. Use the process of elimination to figure out the correct placement of numbers in each box.
5. The answers appear on the last page of this newsletter.

BOX	BLOCK								
			3	9			1		
5		1						4	
9			7			5			
6	2	5	3				7		
			7					8	
7			8			9		3	
8	3		1				9		
	9		2		6			7	
4				3		6	1		

What the example will look like solved 📌

2	4	8	3	9	5	7	1	6
5	7	1	6	2	8	3	4	9
9	3	6	7	4	1	5	8	2
6	8	2	5	3	9	1	7	4
3	5	9	1	7	4	6	2	8
7	1	4	8	6	2	9	5	3
8	6	3	4	1	7	2	9	5
1	9	5	2	8	6	4	3	7
4	2	7	9	5	3	8	6	1



“Friendships are born on the field of athletic strife and the real gold of competition. Awards become corroded, friends gather no dust.”

JESSE OWENS // American track and field athlete

Icons from the Noun Project

DID YOU KNOW?

The **first Olympic Games** took place in the 8th century B.C. in Olympia, Greece. They were held every four years for 12 centuries. Then, in the 4th century A.D., all pagan festivals were banned by Emperor Theodosius I and the Olympics were no more.

The athletic tradition was resurrected about 1500 years later: The **first modern Olympics** were held in 1896 in Greece.

In ancient Greece, athletes didn't worry about sponsorship, protection, or fashion — they **competed naked**. Back then, the games lasted five or six months.

Women have been allowed to compete in the Olympics **since 1900**.

During the 2012 London Games, the Olympic Village required **165,000 towels** for a bit more than two weeks of activity.

Source: ef.edu/blog



Idiom

“Jump the gun”

Meaning Begin something before preparations for it are complete.

Origin ‘Jump the gun’ derives from track and field races and was preceded in the USA by the phrase ‘beat the gun’ (or pistol). This has been known from the early 20th century, as in this example from Crowther and Ruhl’s *Rowing and Track Athletics*, 1905:

False starts were rarely penalized, the pistol generally followed immediately on the signal “Get set!” and so shiftless were the starters and officials that “beating the pistol” was one of the tricks which less sportsmanlike runners constantly practised.

The earliest citation that I can find for ‘jump the gun’ isn’t directly related to athletics, but is a figurative usage, as we use the phrase today — from *The Iowa Homestead*, November 1921:

“Give the pigs a good start; jump the gun, so to speak, and get them on a grain ration before weaning time.”

The use of ‘jump’ in both phrases derives from the ‘make a sudden, unexpected movement’ meaning of the word. This usage is apparent in earlier phrases ‘jump someone’s claim’ and ‘jump ship’ and the later (mid 20th century) ‘jump the queue’.

Source: phrases.org.uk



FROM 1912-1948, **ARTISTS PARTICIPATED** IN THE OLYMPICS: PAINTERS, SCULPTORS, ARCHITECTS, WRITERS, AND MUSICIANS COMPETED FOR MEDALS IN THEIR RESPECTIVE FIELDS.



DURING THE 1936 BERLIN GAMES, TWO JAPANESE POLE-VAULTERS TIED FOR SECOND PLACE. INSTEAD OF COMPETING AGAIN, THEY CUT THE SILVER AND BRONZE MEDALS IN HALF AND **FUSED THE TWO DIFFERENT HALVES TOGETHER** SO THAT EACH OF THEM HAD A HALF-SILVER AND HALF-BRONZE MEDAL.

Icons from Noun Project

ART + CULTURE

Rally

BY ELIZABETH ALEXANDER

The awesome weight of the world had not yet descended
upon his athlete's shoulders. I saw someone light but not feathered

job up to the rickety stage like a jock off the court
played my game *did my best*

and the silent crowd listened and dreamed.
The children sat high on their parents' shoulders.

Then the crowd made noise that gathered and grew
until it was loud and was loud as the sea.

What it meant or would mean was not yet fixed
nor could be, though human beings ever tilt toward *we*.

poets.org

Elizabeth Alexander was born on May 30, 1962, in Harlem, New York, and grew up in Washington, D.C. She received a BA from Yale University, an MA from Boston University, and a PhD in English from the University of Pennsylvania. Her collections of poetry include *Crave Radiance: New and Selected Poems 1990-2010* (Graywolf Press, 2010); *American Sublime* (Graywolf Press, 2005), and many others. Her memoir, *The Light of the World* (Grand Central Publishing, 2015), was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize.

WRITING PROMPT

The tradition of the Olympics is something special where nations around the world strive to set aside their politics and engage in the shared humanity of athletics and sport. Think of some other tradition that encourages individuals to "tilt toward we" and write a poem that expresses the power of community.

Word Search

T	R	U	O	C	E	D	W	E	C	C	T	W	E
J	A	R	O	A	M	T	E	E	D	D	R	M	A
O	O	D	W	O	R	C	A	Y	G	E	E	M	C
C	A	A	E	S	W	U	W	W	A	A	I	R	H
K	T	E	L	E	E	A	T	T	E	L	T	R	L
S	H	M	S	F	R	T	R	E	A	I	P	S	O
L	L	A	T	L	E	I	I	T	E	D	G	M	U
T	E	G	L	T	C	A	S	E	T	E	T	H	D
C	T	U	A	K	I	D	T	C	A	X	E	L	T
W	E	L	E	M	Y	R	H	H	W	I	S	C	T
H	T	T	A	G	R	E	W	A	E	F	A	T	L
T	Y	E	S	K	O	O	E	T	C	R	D	L	I
D	C	D	D	W	E	E	A	O	C	R	E	C	T
T	Y	W	E	M	O	S	E	W	A	X	W	D	E

TILT
RICKETY
JOCK
AWESOME
FEATHERED
ATHLETE
COURT
GAME
PLAYED
STAGE
LOUD
FIXED
GREW
CROWD
WEIGHT
SEA

"Winning doesn't always
mean being first. Winning
means you're doing better
than you've ever done before."

BONNIE BLAIR // American speed skater

POLITICS

The Olympics Have Always Been Political

BY J. WESTON PHIPPEN | *The Atlantic* | July 28, 2016

Russian President Vladimir Putin has always recognized the power of sports. In 2007, with energy prices steadily rising, and Russia's economy bolstered by oil earnings, he flew to Guatemala City to meet with the International Olympic Committee (IOC). There he wooed officials in English and in French, promising an Olympic Games on a scale never seen before.

His work paid off when Russia won the bid to host the 2014 Olympics in Sochi. Before the games began, Putin emphasized his desire that politics and sports remain separate—though the Russian leader appeared to dabble in one while promoting the other. At a news conference before the games opened in January 2014, one Chinese reporter asked Putin if foreign scrutiny of the Russian legislation and corruption were “manifestations of the Cold War?” Yes, Putin said, before complaining of reporters asking so many political questions. The Olympics, he said, “are intended to depoliticize the most pressing international issues and open additional ways to build bridges.”

It is a sentiment he repeated after the Sochi games, and reiterated when faced with a total ban from 2016's Rio games on all Russian athletes because of a widespread state-sponsored doping program. Such a ban, Putin said, would be a “dangerous recurrence of politics interfering in sport.”

But the world has always mixed politics and sports, and Putin's Russia is one of the worst offenders.

“Putin has spent his entire administration in office taking various measures to project an image of strength for Russia,” Michael Newcity, a senior research scholar in Slavic and Eurasian studies at Duke University, told me.

Putin has projected this strength by invading Ukraine, by defending Syria's president, and through sports.

During the Soviet era, the state controlled and promoted sport. In 1949, the USSR's sport committee's goal was to “spread sport to every corner of the land, raise the level of skill and, on that basis, help Soviet athletes win world supremacy in major sports ...” That goal succeeded by most standards. Soviet athletes dominated global sports (despite allegations of doping). The Soviet Union is no more and Russia is no longer communist, but the state still very much controls sports, and intertwines it with politics to this day.

Russia was, in Newcity's words, a “basket case” when Putin assumed power in 1999, and Russians yearned

once again for something to take pride in. Under Putin, Russia's economy grew, boosted by rising energy prices. Disposable income doubled and the country boasted a healthy middle class. The country was one-quarter of the famed BRIC nations (along with Brazil, India, and China), celebrated as a rising economic giant.

“The Sochi Olympics were kind of a coming out party as a great power — that the Russian economy was booming, and it was their opportunity to tell the world they are back,” Newcity said.

Putin loves sports. He's a black belt in Judo. And sports became central to his plan to show off a restored Russia. To wrangle the 2014 Sochi Olympics, Putin personally oversaw the details, soliciting the help of Russia's wealthiest men to dangle the promise of a Sochi transformed into a winter resort. It's safe to say he did this. Putin outspent the Beijing Olympics by nearly \$10 billion, making them the most expensive ever.

The world has always equated the fastest, strongest, most-winning country in the world with the most economically successful, most politically potent. The best proving ground to do that is the Olympics.

Winning, like hosting, is another way to showcase geopolitical relevance. The 1936 Berlin games were largely an international advertisement for Adolf Hitler's Germany and his policies, but are best remembered for Jesse Owens's four gold medals.

Conversely, boycotting the games or banishing a country from competition has been a way to protest, or to shun the politics of a state. The IOC banned South Africa from competition for 21 years during the apartheid era. In the Cold War, in 1980, the U.S. refused to compete in Moscow to protest the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan; Russia returned the favor in the 1984 Los Angeles games.

And that's just the 20th century. Politics, and political banishment in the Olympics date back to its ancient Greek version. The city-state of Elis, which controlled the ancient games, remained neutral in disputes and wars. But during the Peloponnesian War in 424 B.C., Elis sided with Athens and banned Athens's rival, Sparta, from competing in the 89th Olympiad. Given that history, it may be there never was hope of an Olympic Games devoid of politics, something George Orwell believed was inseparable from any international competition.

“Sport,” Orwell argued, “is war minus the shooting.” ●



DURING THE SUMMER OLYMPICS, A FELLOW COMPETED IN THE LONG JUMP AND OUT-JUMPED EVERYBODY. HE DIDN'T JUST WIN THE EVENT, HE ACTUALLY BROKE THE WORLD RECORD HELD FOR THAT EVENT. NOBODY BROKE HIS RECORD FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE OLYMPICS, AND STILL TODAY HIS NAME IS IN THE RECORD BOOKS. HOWEVER, EVEN THOUGH HE HOLDS THE WORLD RECORD, HE NEVER RECEIVED A MEDAL IN THE LONG JUMP. **HOW DID HE MANAGE TO DO SO WELL, BUT NOT RECEIVE A MEDAL?**

solveordie.com

✎ Edited for clarity and space

ECONOMICS

Are the Olympics Ever Worth it for the Host City?

BY TIM HYDE | *American Economic Association* | August 8, 2016

People are beginning to wonder: does anyone want to host the Olympics anymore? A study appearing in the Spring issue of the *Journal of Economic Perspectives* breaks down the costs and benefits of hosting the Olympic Games and explains why some of the perceived economic blessings of the Olympics are mostly wishful thinking.

In *Going for the Gold: The Economics of the Olympics*, authors Robert Baade and Victor Matheson consult estimates from academic, public, and media sources on the costs and benefits of hosting the Games. As with any mega-event, costs and benefits can be hard to estimate, but the general story is clear: for most modern Olympics, the costs have far outstripped the benefits.

The direct costs of hosting the Games are probably easier to estimate and tabulate. First there is the non-trivial cost of mounting a bid, which can run into the hundreds of millions of dollars for planning, marketing, and architectural renderings. During this stage, candidate cities sign on to build future amenities in an attempt to impress the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and win the Games.

This might mean committing to a signature architectural marvel to host the Opening Ceremonies or a major upgrade to public transit to accommodate the once-in-a-lifetime demand surge that will result. A minimum of 40,000 hotel rooms and additional housing for 15,000 athletes and officials is required for the Summer Olympics, so often the bids must include plans for new hotel capacity and dormitories.

The IOC will tend to favor the city that makes the most lavish offer of gleaming new facilities and infrastructure improvements, so the bidding process can give way to a “winner’s curse” effect. The city that wins tends to be the one that overestimated the value of hosting the Olympics the most, and hence the one that went furthest overboard in their bid.

Once the Olympics have been assigned, the host city must typically spend billions of dollars building transit and airport improvements, reaching the requisite hotel capacity, and constructing specialized athletic facilities like a swimming facility, a velodrome, or a larger stadium that can accommodate an Olympic track. Disentangling these costs from planned infrastructure improvements that would have happened even in the absence of the Olympics can be difficult, but the best estimates put the cost of hosting at between \$5 and \$15 billion for most recent events.

Mounting evidence showing that hosting the Games is a costly proposition for host cities seems to have turned voters across the world against the idea. A popular outcry



derailed the Boston 2024 bid, and city officials scuttled Hamburg’s 2024 bid after losing a referendum there.

Increasingly, it seems like cities in liberal democracies are not willing to bid for the games: the competition for the 2022 Winter Olympics was reduced to two cities in autocratic regimes after four European cities dropped out. Not coincidentally, the authors note, the two recent Olympics hosted in countries with less accountable governments were major outliers in terms of cost.

The costs are clear, but the benefits of hosting the Olympics can be substantial as well, even if they are usually overstated by overzealous city officials or self-interested boosters. Host cities receive revenue from ticketing and sponsorships, and local organizing committees receive a share of the proceeds from the sale of television broadcast rights. These benefits are easy to quantify, but don’t add up to a significant fraction of the hosting costs in most cases. Vancouver 2010 produced about \$1.5 billion in direct revenues and London 2012 about \$3.3 billion; in each case, far less than the costs.

The rest of the benefits are more nebulous. Proponents tout supposed benefits ranging from the economic stimulus provided by construction demand, to increased tourism during and after the games thanks to a worldwide advertising campaign, to increased foreign investment and better trade connections, to an improved sports infrastructure for future generations. The

The iconic National Stadium in Beijing was the architectural centerpiece of the 2008 Olympic Games. Today it has partially been converted into apartments, although it will eventually be used again for the 2022 Winter Games.

Image by Zhu Difeng/
Bigstock



I SWING AROUND
ON STICKS, AND
USE THEM TO
DO MY TRICKS, A
WHITE POWDER
HELPS ME TO
GRIP, AND PEOPLE
CHEER WHEN I
FLIP. **WHAT AM I?**

getriddles.com

authors argue that most of these benefits tend to be less than hoped, or only appear in specific situations.

Infrastructure improvements can provide a form of fiscal stimulus to a city with a slack labor market, but if the city's economy is near full employment anyway in the years leading up to the Games, the extra construction jobs are more likely to come at the expense of other sectors.

Tourism, meanwhile, can be crowded out by the hustle and bustle of the Olympics themselves – Beijing and London both saw *fewer* international visitors during the months they were hosting the Olympics in 2008 and 2012 compared to the same months in previous years, and Utah ski resorts noticed a dip in traffic during the 2001-02 ski season that coincided with the Salt Lake City games.

A few cities have had success generating future tourism business with the Olympics, notably Barcelona in 1992 which used the games to emerge from the shadow of nearby Madrid, another major tourist destination. Likewise, the Utah ski economy saw a boost in the years after 2002. But many other host cities like Calgary (1984) and Lillehammer (1994) have seen limited increases in tourism after their games.

One study did find that countries hosting the Olympics see a 20% increase in export trade in the years after hosting, relative to similarly-situated countries, which might go a long way to justifying the economic expense of hosting the event. But the same study found similar gains for countries where cities unsuccessfully bid for the Olympics. The authors suggest that the very act of bidding for the Olympic Games suggests a government is looking to increase international connections and willing to make infrastructure investments, which can attract foreign interest.

It is also likely that the types of cities that decide to mount bids are on an economic upswing and poised for growth, and actually winning that bid might be more likely to stunt that growth rather than accelerate it.

The balance of evidence is that the economic costs of hosting the Olympics far outpace the benefits, so why do cities bother to bid at all? One possibility is civic pride or the desire to affirm a city's status as a "world city."

These benefits are hard to translate into economic terms, but two careful studies used **contingent valuation** survey methods (similar to the techniques economists use to see how much people value maintaining the rainforests or keeping a species from extinction) to measure this benefit in the runup to the 2012 Olympics in London. They found that people across the United Kingdom collectively valued the opportunity to host the Olympics at about £2 billion, still well short of the cost of hosting.

This problem may end up solving itself if enough cities wise up and stop incorporating such grandiose plans into their bids. After a streak of cost overruns for Olympics during the 1970s, interest in hosting the Olympics waned and Los Angeles was the only bidder for the 1984 Games. The city used its leverage to insist

on using existing facilities rather than building new ones and adopted a cost-conscious approach that maximized sponsorship and TV revenues. The result was one of the few profitable games in history – and a model that future host cities might want to emulate. ●

● Edited for clarity and space

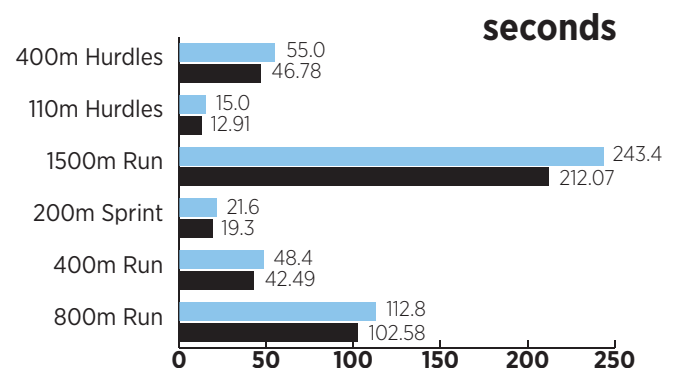
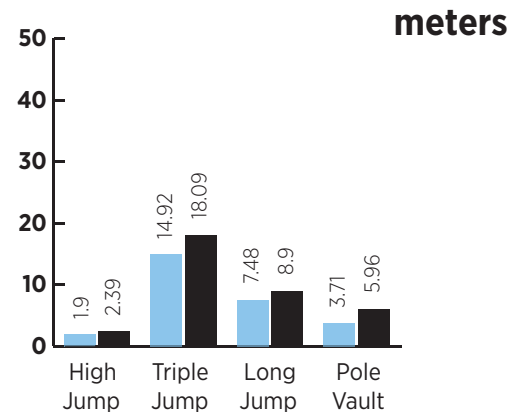
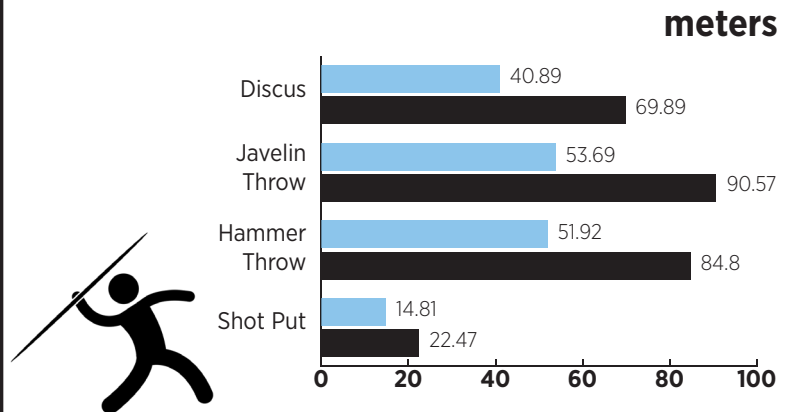
RANDOM-NEST

Olympic Records Over Time

BY CHRIS GEHRZ | PIETISTSCHOOLMAN.COM | JULY 27, 2012

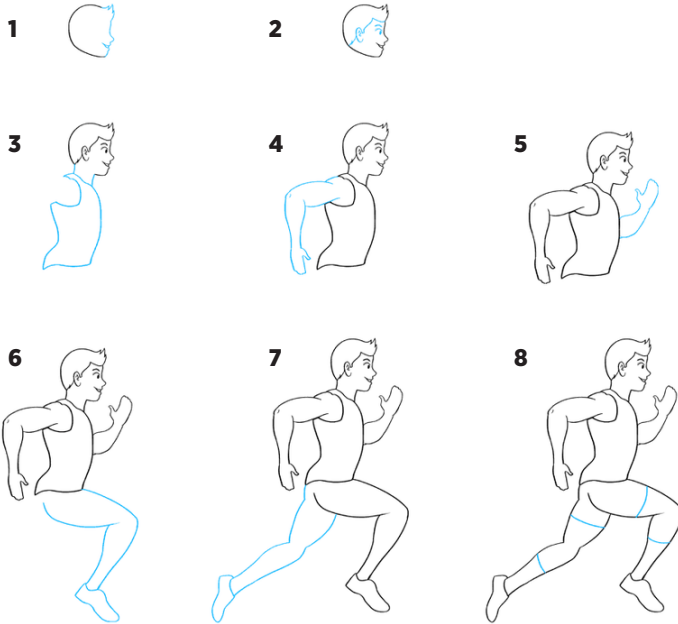
How Olympic world records have changed over the course of 100 years. All of the events represented here are men's events. *1 meter = 3.24 feet*

■ 1908 ■ 2008



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Words of Encouragement

There is a tiny poem I often think about in dark times: Kay Ryan's "The Best of It." We are resilient and often beautiful creatures. Even when we are "carved up," downtrodden, and depressed, there is a light within us that persists, that "mak[es] the best of it" and refuses to fold in the face of adversity. Our creativity can thrive on the smallest and subtlest of things. In certain situations, "one bean" can indeed nourish us, even if Ryan's poem seems somewhat skeptical about that at the end. Our "one bean" is something to protect, cultivate, and believe in; it can be anything: the love for a friend or family member, the love of laughter, or the love of art.

The Best of It

BY KAY RYAN

However carved up
or pared down we get,
we keep on making
the best of it as though
it doesn't matter that
our acre's down to
a square foot. As
though our garden
could be one bean
and we'd rejoice if
it flourishes, as
though one bean
could nourish us.

Greg



1061 Beard-Eaves Memorial Coliseum // Auburn University, AL 36849

Answers

SUDOKU #69

7	1	3	5	6	4	9	2	8
9	4	8	3	2	1	7	6	5
5	2	6	9	8	7	1	3	4
6	8	4	7	3	5	2	1	9
3	9	2	6	1	8	4	5	7
1	5	7	4	9	2	6	8	3
8	3	9	1	4	6	5	7	2
2	7	1	8	5	9	3	4	6
4	6	5	2	7	3	8	9	1

SUDOKU #70

2	4	1	7	3	6	9	8	5
5	7	8	1	4	9	2	6	3
9	6	3	8	5	2	4	1	7
7	9	6	2	8	5	3	4	1
1	5	4	6	9	3	8	7	2
3	8	2	4	7	1	6	5	9
8	2	9	5	6	7	1	3	4
4	3	7	9	1	8	5	2	6
6	1	5	3	2	4	7	9	8



Brainteasers

Page 2 Rebus Puzzle: 1. A cut above the rest 2. Room for improvement 3. An afterthought

Page 3 Your breath; Because the ice might crack up

Page 7 He was competing in the decathlon (a combination of 10 events). He won the long jump event, but didn't perform very well in the other events. He lost the decathlon, so he didn't receive any medals (even though he holds the world record for long jump).

Page 8 A gymnast

Send ideas and comments to:

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UNTIL NEXT TIME !